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PERSEPOLIS AND ITS SETTLEMENTS: TERRITORIAL SYSTEM AND IDEOLOGY IN THE ACHAEMENID STATE

edited by

GIAN PIETRO BASELLO and ADRIANO V. ROSSI

Napoli 2012

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Series Minor

LXXVIII

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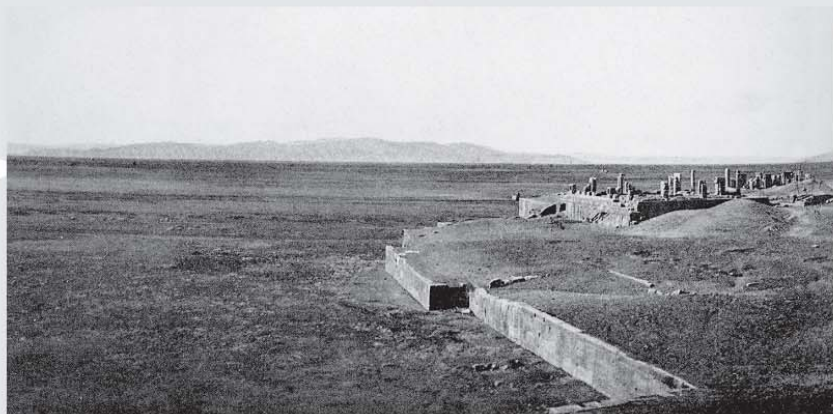


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The volume contains the results of an international collaboration between Iranian, French and Italian scholarships.

The articles are enriched by over a hundred of colour plates and maps.



Persepolis in 1928 (after E. Herzfeld, *Rapport sur l'état actuel des ruines de Persépolis*. *Archäologische Mitteilungen aus Iran* 1 (1929), fig. 2).

Cover image: Persepolis in 2010 from the slope of the Kuh-e Rahmat (photo by G.P. Basello). Background: map of the Persepolis area (after A. Britt Tilia, *Studies and Restorations at Persepolis and Other Sites of Fārs*, vol. II. Rome, 1978); drawings of unpublished Achaemenid royal inscriptions on column bases in the Persepolis Museum (DARIOSH Project, drawings by G.P. Basello).

University "L'Orientale" is the name which the Oriental Institute of Naples adopted since 2002. It embodies the oldest school of Sinology and Oriental studies in Europe, being one of the main Italian universities devoted to the study and field research on the languages and cultures of extra-European countries.

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Foreword

This is the second volume of the series *DARIOSH Studies*, published by DAAM (Dipartimento Asia, Africa e Mediterraneo), Università degli studi di Napoli “L’Orientale” with the financial support of the Italian Ministry for Education and University (PRIN 2005105580, PRIN 2007ZKPPSM and PRIN 2009JHSEE7) jointly with ISMEO/ASSOCIAZIONE INTERNAZIONALE DI STUDI SUL MEDITERRANEO E L’ORIENTE.

DARIOSH (Digital Achaemenid Royal Inscription Open Schema Hypertext) is the denomination of a joint Italian-Iranian project, established in the early 2000s by a cooperation between the NATIONAL MUSEUM OF IRAN, the PARSA-PASARGADAE FOUNDATION and the ISTITUTO ITALIANO PER L’AFRICA E L’ORIENTE (IsIAO, now dissolved and scientifically continued by ISMEO/ASSOCIAZIONE INTERNAZIONALE DI STUDI SUL MEDITERRANEO E L’ORIENTE).

The Project is based at L’Orientale University of Naples, with the collaboration of La Tuscia University of Viterbo, and aims at the study of the trilingual corpus of the Royal Achaemenid inscriptions through a complete catalogue of the epigraphic units (with a new high-resolution photographic documentation) and an interlinguistically integrated edition of the texts (with translation, commentary and cross-linguistic dictionaries), both on-line and in print.

While the first volume of the series was dedicated to the illustration of the methods used in the new edition, translation and commentary of the Royal Inscriptions which will be carried on in the further volumes as soon as groups of inscriptions will be ready for publication, the present volume contains the Proceedings of a Conference held at La Tuscia University of Viterbo on the theme: “Territorial System and Ideology in the Achaemenid State: Persepolis and its Settlements” (16th-17th December 2010).

The Conference was summoned to discuss the final results of the National Research Project (PRIN 2007ZKPPSM) on “Territorial system and ideology in the Achaemenid State: Persepolis and its settlement”, in which three Research Units have participated: “Persepolis in the archaeological, epigraphic, lexicographical

documentation”, directed by Prof. A.V. Rossi at L’Orientale University; “Persepolis, the Mazdean Cult and the Achaemenid Kingship”, directed by Prof. A. Panaino at the University of Bologna, and “The political discourse in the Achaemenid state: linguistic and lexical studies on Persepolis trilingual inscriptions” directed by Prof. E. Filippone at La Tuscia University.

The Viterbo Conference was particularly centred on Persepolis, also because an Iranian-Italian archaeological Mission (directed by Prof. P. Callieri, University of Bologna) is active there and the epigraphic team of DARIOSH (directed by Prof. A.V. Rossi, L’Orientale University and Prof. E. Filippone, La Tuscia University) has been working since mid-2000s on its monuments, but scholars from different international institutions were also invited, and a friendly and productive atmosphere (congealed by the weather conditions prevailing in Viterbo in those December days, but surely warmed up by the human exchanges of the protagonists of the meeting) was established on the occasion.

The single scholars remain responsible for their own contributions, which the editors have not sought to change. In a subject as dynamic and complex as Achaemenid studies there are inevitably differences of opinion on single matters, and these will be reflected in the individual papers.

The Viterbo Conference would not have been possible without the help and encouragement of many people whose assistance at different phases cannot be recalled here; thanks are especially due to the host institution, represented at the opening session by Prof. G. Platania, Dean of the Faculty of Foreign Languages and Cultures.

GIAN PIETRO BASELLO

ADRIANO V. ROSSI

Building Chronology and Epigraphic Chronology at Persepolis: DPa, DPb and XPk*

Peter Calmeyer is perhaps the scholar who has most worked on the dating of the buildings on the Persepolis platform, both in terms of relative and absolute chronology. In addition to his several papers dedicated to single stylistic or building features, his contributions where his overall vision of these themes is best summarized are his presentation to the IV Achaemenid Meeting at Groningen (1990), his article on Persepolis in the *Enciclopedia italiana dell'Arte antica classica e orientale* (appeared a few months after his death in 1996), and a singular (and rarely quoted) communication to the III Achaemenid Meeting at Groningen (1988) on duplications and variations in the Achaemenid communicative strategies.

In the table published in Calmeyer (1980: 18-19), the author tries to put in parallel the dating of Persepolis buildings and the dating of other sites, as obtained both from epigraphic and building data; in it, the inscriptions he considered as exactly datable (*genauere inschriftliche Datierungen*) are printed in Italic, those considered as hardly datable are printed in Roman.

The difficulties which Calmeyer found in compiling his tabular representation of inscriptional dating, crossed with building dating, are reminiscent of those encountered by Michel Roaf, who produced a series of plans¹ which summarize the reconstructed sequence of building operations on the terrace at Persepolis, remarking: "These plans show only a limited number of phases and represent the construction as a series of steps rather

* The present paper contains preliminary results of a series of research projects on Achaemenid epigraphy funded by the Italian Ministry of Education (PRIN 2005105580, PRIN 2007ZKPPSM, PRIN 2009JHSEE7), under the supervision of the present author. Many thanks to the members of the DARIOSH Project Gian Pietro Basello, Grazia Giovinazzo and Ela Filippone, with whom I discussed on several occasions many of the issues treated in this paper.

¹ Roaf 1984: 151-156, fig. 152-157.

than as a gradual progression. Furthermore, the necessity of putting a building on a particular plan commits one to a single possibility when the date may be uncertain and more than one alternative is tenable".²

Since I cannot comment on all of the problems involved in Calmeyer's reasoning, I will limit myself to some problematic cases which may better illustrate how often epigraphic arguments and building (and dynastic) matters mix with each other in a way which is not so easy to get through; my aim is showing how much even what Calmeyer considers as "*genaue inschriftliche Datierungen*" can be disputable.

Let us start from the Persepolis building labelled by Erich Schmidt as Palace I,³ often improperly referred to as 'the *tačara*' or 'Palace of Darius'.⁴

This building contains an architectural feature, i.e. its south doorway, whose jambs display reliefs with royal figures and inscriptions in a mirror-reflection manner. Calmeyer seems to consider it as dated with certainty thanks to the presence of the small inscription XPk, containing Xerxes' name, on one of the royal garments (*eindeutig durch Inschriften des Xerxes datiert*). In the same location one finds two inscriptions, relevant to the royal figure, inscribed in the name of Darius, i.e. DPa and DPb. The location of DPa, DPb and XPk is shown in two maps printed by Shahbazi in the *Corpus inscriptionum iranicarum* portfolio dedicated to the Persepolis platform.⁵

DPa, trilingual, occurs on both jambs of the doorway connecting the portico with the main hall, carved above the figures of the Great King and two gentlemen to the King's Chamber,⁶ replicated in the "mirror-reflection" manner.⁷ In both cases the OP text is the closest to the southern edge

² Roaf 1984: 150.

³ See Schmidt 1953, fig. 21.

⁴ By the way, already Schmidt 1953: 223 fn. 18 had emphasized that *tačara* and *hadiš* are used interchangeably in the inscriptions of Darius and Xerxes "in designating the same palace", so it is better to avoid contrasting in these terms Building I (conventionally called *tačara* or Darius' Palace) and Building F (conventionally called *hadiš* or Xerxes' Palace). On this see Rossi 2003.

⁵ Shahbazi 1985: 19, map 2 (DPa), 20, map 3 (DPb, XPk). DARIOSH has updated Shahbazi's maps correcting many details as to the locations and contents; see a preliminary version of the maps of Building F (so-called Palace of Xerxes) and Building I (so-called Palace of Darius) here at Fig. 2 and Fig. 3.

⁶ Not 'attendants', as commonly assumed (cf. Erdmann 1960: 28: "Würdenträger").

⁷ The inscriptions are now denominated (cf. Schmitt 2009: 12) DPa^E and DPa^W, according to a symbolization first introduced by Shahbazi 1985.

of the jamb, which means the last one reads leaving the hall in the direction of the portico. Next follows the Elamite text, in the middle of the sequence, finally the Babylonian version (which is the first one encounters when leaving the hall). The OP text says: "Darius the Great King, King of the Kings, King of the countries, son of Hystaspes, the Achaemenid, who built this *tačara*".

DPb was carved on the vertical folds of the King's garment in the relief on the western jamb of the doorway which bears DPa above the figure of the King. The mutilation of the King's garment was caused by the removal of the inscription by Cornelis de Bruin⁸ in early 1700s (perhaps 1704); fragments of it are reproduced in the folding containing fig. 133 in his *Reizen*.⁹ However, by rearranging De Bruin's confused copy of the cuneiform characters on the pieces of stone extracted from the folds of the garment of the principal figure, Cameron¹⁰ succeeded to reconstruct two autonomous trilingual inscriptions, now labelled DPb and XPk, respectively bearing the following wordings: "Darius the great King, son of Hystaspes, the Achaemenid" (DPb), and "Xerxes, the son of Darius the King, the Achaemenid" (XPk). The circumstance that Xerxes' name is not accompanied by any other specification excepted "son of Darius the King, the Achaemenid", has given cause to a long debate.¹¹

Herzfeld had been the first to point out remnants of the inscription now labelled XPk, which was carved on three of the vertical folds of the King's garment (see Fig. 3).¹² He assumed that this inscription shows what he

⁸ de Bruijn or de Bruyn in its original Dutch spelling, Le Brun in French spelling.

⁹ de Bruin 1714, fig. 133 between p. 66 and 67. The same numbering is maintained in the French edition commonly quoted (cf. also Benveniste 1951: 264 fn. 2). Benveniste 1951 is a detailed reconstruction of the history of DPb.

¹⁰ *Apud* Schmidt 1953: 223.

¹¹ Cf. Roaf 1983: 138 and many other scholars in a similar way ("Xerxes does not have a political rank recorded" is the original formulation of Nimchuk 2001: 100). Consider that Schmitt (2000: 98) formulation "the only inscription of Persepolis whose author does not claim to be king" is more accurate than Schmitt (2009: 170) "Xerxes-Inschrift an einem Dareios-Relief, in der beim Textautor der Königstitel fehlt".

¹² First modern treatments Borger 1975: 171 fn. 9 and Schmitt 2000: 98; only since Borger 1975 we know the existence of fragments of a XPk Babylonian version, which even today is not rarely ignored (cf. Lecoq 1997: 259, describing XPk as an "inscription « signature » bilingue, en vieux perse et élamite").

called the ‘official title’ of the heir to the throne (i.e. ‘son of the King’)¹³ and considered the display of Xerxes’ image with the royal crown in Palace I as evidence for his hypotheses of both a co-regency of Darius and Xerxes, and a particular role of the son in the building of his father’s palace:

Er trägt den großköniglichen ornat [...] Daß er sich so auf einem bau seines vaters abbilden läßt, zeigt, daß er “was sein vater gebaut hatte, beaufsichtigte”, mit der bauleitung beauftragt war.¹⁴

The present state of the discussions on XPk is summarized by Schmitt in his recent treatments of the subject.¹⁵ The long supremacy of Herzfeld’s idea of Darius/Xerxes co-regency,¹⁶ strongly supported by Calmeyer¹⁷ and still hold by Shahbazi,¹⁸ was only interrupted episodically, as e.g. by E. Schmidt, who rejected the assumption that the figure on the west jamb was inscribed with Xerxes’ name as crown prince on the ground that the figure carries the sceptre (strict prerogative of the King):

He [Herzfeld – AVR] does not explain why the crown prince’s name should identify the image of the king, who bears the sceptre – the only distinguishing attribute of the ruler’s apparel in the king-crown prince’s reliefs of the Treasury and the Council Hall. [...] While accepting the inscription as restored, we should assume that it was

¹³ Herzfeld 1932: 8; see also Cameron’s sceptical attitude on this statement (*apud* Schmidt 1953: 224).

¹⁴ Herzfeld 1938: 42, the most quoted comment on XPk.

¹⁵ Schmitt 1999: 323–324 (and Plate 1); 2000: 98; 2009: 21 and 170. Note that while Schmitt’s 2009 formulation for the location of XPk is straightforward (“Reste einer Inschrift [...] am östlichen Pfosten des Südeingangs zur Tacara-Halle, genau gegenüber DPb”), those adopted in previous works (e.g. “XPk is an exact mirror-image counterpart to DPb” 2000: 98) may mislead the reader, giving the impression that the mirror-image counterpart is the cuneiform text itself.

¹⁶ Herzfeld 1932: 13.

¹⁷ Calmeyer 1976: 83.

¹⁸ Shahbazi 1985: 11–12. See also Root 1979: 83–85 and fn. 117. The idea of an Achaemenid co-regency has at last been discarded by current historians, cf. e.g. Schmitt 1986: 80; Wiesehöfer 1996: 30; Briant 2002: 958 §2 (where the English translation of XPk xšay[a]ršā dārayavah[auš xš]āyaθya puça [hax]āmani[šya] is erroneously given – differently from Briant’s French original – as “Xerxes, son of King Darius, Achaemenid king”); Kuhrt 2007: 304 n. 4.

added by Xerxes after his father's death, though we cannot explain the omission of the royal title after Xerxes' name.¹⁹

A deeper analysis of the role of the palatial decorations and the court scenes depicted in the transitional parts of the Persepolis buildings²⁰ could help clarifying the interrelation among DPa, DPb and XPk. In Calmeyer's views, the royal guards depicted in doorways within the palaces or at the main entrances are to be considered neither as mere duplications of the actual soldiers in the same doors, as often assumed, nor as a kind of magical guardians (the human-headed, winged bulls in the gate buildings being entrusted with this function). They were there most likely to show to everyone that the owner of the house was a King. From this point of view, the functions of the images of the Kings themselves could not have been so different from that of the guards, who are found in similar positions at the doorways or main entrances.²¹

A major question advanced by Calmeyer is whether we should reckon here with the same member of the royal family, mirror-image duplicated (in the same manner in which animals, guards etc. are), or if we should envisage here an intention to depict two different figures of the family, even if both characterized by exactly the same royal attributes. In particular, the details of the depiction of the royal figure in the relief with Xerxes' name are the same as those of Darius on the other jamb. The fact that OP, Elamite and Babylonian versions of DPa inscriptions (on the top of the royal images, see Fig. 1) are ordered in a specular way, would confirm, according to Calmeyer, the specular duplicate interpretation.

Calmeyer underlines²² a contradiction in Herzfeld's 1941²³ interpretation of the mirror-images as the King's standard images: Herzfeld considered decisive the label inscription mentioning Xerxes *only* in the case of

¹⁹ Schmidt 1953: 224.

²⁰ See also Calmeyer 1980: 60.

²¹ By the way, I do not agree with Root's insistence (1979 *passim*) on the lack of narrative visual context in such cases with the king poised timeless, on the threshold of the door, and her pointing to a conception according to which thresholds have a liminal meaning and therefore the king's portrayal within the doorjamb emphasizes a liminal experience, a transition from one state of kingship to another.

²² Calmeyer 1988: 104 fn. 12.

²³ Herzfeld 1941: 270.

XPk. And with this we turn full circle: does the label prevail on the image or the image on the label?

The fact remains that despite an apparent wealth of texts and images at Persepolis, there are surprisingly few extant reliefs with associated texts, or texts with associated reliefs, and the only combinations of inscriptions and images related to Darius are just found in Palace F and Palace I; consequently, we should explain anomalies in these buildings on the basis of regularities mostly deduced from the buildings themselves. Moreover, the majority of extant inscriptions from Persepolis are found just in the areas of these two buildings, which are presumed to represent the non-public area of the platform, a circumstance that could be debited to the uneven plundering of building materials on the terrace.²⁴

In his essay on Persepolis sculpture (1983), Roaf introduces a section on 'dated reliefs' between the end of Darius' reign and the beginning of Xerxes' reign with a rather articulated preamble in which he emphasizes the difficulties found in distinguishing between the two building periods with the following words:

the minor variations in the style of the Persepolis reliefs from reign to reign are so insignificant that they would be lost in any absolute description. But such a description is not necessary. Here we are interested in the development and changes, and so the relative description of the various styles, how the later styles differ from the earlier, will suffice. For this reason I will take the style of the end of Darius' reign and the beginning of Xerxes' reign as a fixed quantity and will compare the later reliefs to it.²⁵

In his analysis, Roaf produces arguments for building activities in Palace I at Xerxes' time: the fact that the antae and the southern façade have inscriptions of Xerxes (XPc), proves, according to him, that this part of the building was probably completed at the beginning of his reign; moreover, he considers the style in which the Court gentlemen of the south doorway of Palace I are depicted as virtually identical to that of the figures on the West and the East stairs of Palace F. In this context, his judgement suspension on the (political) meaning of XPk ("One of the royal figures in the

²⁴ This is one of the main reasons whereby Roaf's statistical approach to Persepolis sculptures hardly may produce appreciable results, as remarked by Sancisi-Weerdenburg in her 1992 review.

²⁵ Roaf 1983: 138.

South doorway is labelled with the name of Xerxes (XPk), apparently without a royal title, though there is doubt about the significance of this inscription”) should be interpreted as in favour of Xerxes’ intervention on the relief after Darius’ death.

Arguing mostly in this same way, DARIOSH has hypothesized that the whole (or parts) of the superstructure of Palace I could have been completed by Xerxes’ time. All the inscriptions contained in it (DPa, DPb and XPk) could have been engraved in this period, ideated by the son in the father’s name out of filial respect,²⁶ with the peculiar aim of enhancing the continuity of his reign with that of Darius. DPa, with its isolated structure of a caption to a royal figure (*Dārayavauš*, with royal titles), also mentioning (in a relative clause) the results of the royal building activity (*haya imam tacaram akunauš*), represents in some way a counterpart to XPc, explicitly stating this activity. Moreover, besides the inscriptional patterns explicitly describing the work done on buildings or enterprises started by royal predecessors (such as e.g. XPf, XPg), there is also a pattern in which the inscription is written *directly* in the name of the predecessor by his heir (such as DEa, which should coherently be redesignated XEb).²⁷

This is in line with Roaf’s structural remarks: the metal clamps chronology devised by Nylander²⁸ suggests a rather early date, and this is the main reason why he considers that Palace I was started by Darius and completed by Xerxes.²⁹

As far as decoration elements are concerned, one should say that they are often ambiguous for dating. In Palace F, e.g., Roaf finds that “the tendrils of the winged discs on the West and East stairs end in three prongs, a more archaic form than the spiral tendrils found on the South stairs of Darius’ Palace”. But again: “Does this mean that Xerxes completed his own palace design before completing his father’s palace, or does it mean, as is more likely, that the change in form of the winged disc was not solely

²⁶ Even (as some scholar proposed) in memory of a real joint planning, involving in some way Darius himself.

²⁷ In favour of the attribution of the Elvend inscription in the name of Darius to Xerxes are not only the reasons given in Schmitt 2007: 31-34, 2009: 10, 96-97, but also DARIOSH 2008 investigations on the rock at Mt Elvend.

²⁸ Nylander 1970: 81.

²⁹ Roaf 1983: 157.

chronological ? [...]”.³⁰ In any case, the orthostats of the palace, but not the stairs, were carved from the black Majdabad stone “particularly favoured by Xerxes”.³¹

The same ambiguities could be found if we take into account epigraphic features. The inscriptional frame typologies attested at Persepolis (four types according to a classification established during an overall survey made by DARIOSH in 2008³²), and the writing features as a whole (e.g. dimensions of wedges, depth of carving etc. for the three scripts)³³ could lead to believe that the overall inscriptional style of Palace 1 is that of Darius’ reign.³⁴

If we turn to Palace F, “eindeutig durch Inschriften des Xerxes datiert” (Calmeyer), we find “a similar situation but in a reverse order”³⁵ in the relationship between texts and iconography. The East doorway on the northern side of the main hall, decorated with royal scenes, is in a fragmentary state. The eastern jamb is extant only to a level slightly above the top of the parasol, and the scene is highly damaged. No upper level inscription survives from this jamb. However, the lower portion of the King’s garment has survived, and is inscribed with parts of the trilingual XPe text, stating “Xerxes, Great King, King of Kings, son of King Darius, the Achaemenid”. The western jamb of this doorway is in pieces, with only the upper portion intact (from slightly above the inscription field to the parasol shade), and on it Shahbazi discovered in 1978, that the upper inscription, contrary to his own expectations, was not another copy of XPe, but rather a copy of DPb (by Shahbazi denominated DPb^H, by Schmitt [2009] DPj³⁶). Does it mean that Darius during his life let his son build his own palace, even larger than Darius’ one? Or does Darius wear the same crown of Xerxes since he has

³⁰ Roaf 1983: 138.

³¹ *ibid.*

³² Cf. DARIOSH *Studies I*, sub “Border styles” in the catalogue of the Persepolis Inscriptions *in situ*.

³³ A very preliminary survey of the palaeographical aspects was outlined during the same DARIOSH 2008 mission.

³⁴ H. Koch considers Building 1 as hardly started at the time of Darius, even if for reasons linked to space reorganization in the areas surrounding the so-called *apadana* (Koch 1987: 154-155).

³⁵ Shahbazi 1985: 11.

³⁶ Cf. Schmitt 1986: 80 fn. 6; 81.

passed the royal power to his son? Or does the presence of the crown on the royal image³⁷ mean that Darius himself is already dead?

The main point of the question is again: which relationship does exist in this case between the inscriptions and the images pertaining to them? Is it right to state, as e.g. Koch does, that a portrait of a King (Darius) could become a portrait of another King (Xerxes) by the mere carving of a label with a different name, even if the personages were depicted exactly in the same manner (*in völlig gleicher Weise dargestellte Personen*)³⁸? Or are Palace F and Palace I evidence of the fact that in this particular, 'private' area of the platform "the connection between image and inscription is more intimate than one might suppose?"³⁹

Even text linguistics and pragmatics do not seem of much help in this connection, if one considers that the same brief formulation of DPb has recently been judged by one scholar as representative of "a lessening in the remoteness of the text [...] an intimate connection between the timeless figure of kingship and the actual person of the king"⁴⁰ and by another as a clue of the distance displayed by Xerxes in speaking of his father.⁴¹ In any case, the Achaemenid labels on the walls are surely not ideated to

³⁷ On the assumption that the distinctive features of the Achaemenid crowns should be fully appreciated only through painted colours cf. Koch 1987: 153 fn. 30, Henkelman 1995/96: 292.

³⁸ Koch 1987: 153 fn. 30: "Die Tatsache, daß man in völlig gleicher Weise dargestellte Personen durch die Beischrift entweder als Dareios oder als Xerxes bezeichnen konnte (Dareios- und Xerxes-Palast), ohne irgendeine weitere Änderung vorzunehmen, spricht auch dafür, daß man sich keiner charakteristischen Äußerlichkeiten dieser Könige bewußt war, sondern daß allein die Inschrift der Dargestellten zu Dareios oder zu Xerxes machte".

³⁹ Nimchuk 2001: 111.

⁴⁰ Nimchuk 2001: 99: "Although this label is in the 3rd person, because of its location there is a lessening in the remoteness of the text. The viewer now sees an intimate connection between the timeless figure of kingship and the actual person of the king".

⁴¹ Schmitt 2009: 114: "Die ganz unpersönliche Formulierung des Textes, insb. aber die Verknüpfung des Relativpronomens (als Subjekt) mit einer Verbalform der 3. Person (nicht, wie im Vedischen und Avestischen, der 1. Person) legt die Annahme nahe, daß der Verfasser der Inschrift nicht Dareios war, diese vielmehr später, nämlich unter Xerxes, entstanden ist. Damit findet auch die auffällige Konstellation der Inschriften DPa, DPb und XPk (vgl. Shahbazi 1985, 10 Fig. 1) eine einfache Erklärung".

speak to visitors with the aim of describing the different subjects of the reliefs, but they must be considered as an integral part of the images, one of their innate properties, speaking, so to say, to themselves.

A last word may perhaps be said about the way in which Xerxes' name appears in XPk xšay[a]ršā dārayavah[auš xš]āyaθya puça [hax]āmani[šya], already discussed above.

The recent publication of an Elamite tablet from Persepolis (NN 1657), dated to Darius' "third month, 24th year" (=May/June 498 BCE), provides the earliest dated reference to a 'Xerxes' who hardly can be a person other than the future Achaemenid King, in the following context: "a Parthian named Tamšakama, spear bearer, sent/assigned by Xerxes (^{HAL}še-ir-šá), together with his three companions, sent from the King to Parthia".⁴² W.F.M. Henkelman, the editor of the tablet, comments:

It predates 486 BC, the date of Xerxes' selection as crown prince according to Herodotus, by twelve years. And although our text does not state Xerxes' rank, it does indicate that he had at least attained a position of some importance. Parthian men, spear bearers, were assigned by him. The term used, *dama*, suggests in this context a role in the chain of command, perhaps as (a) commander in the important satrapy of Parthia. Since the Parthian men were travelling from the King to Parthia, and were carrying a sealed authorisation from the King, they may have been initially dispatched by Xerxes to report to his father. Having done so, they were now heading back with the King's response. The context makes the scribe's silence on Xerxes' title (or the fact that he was Darius' son) eloquent: his position was apparently well-known.⁴³

A few lines below, Henkelman argues that "the absence of the title" in XPk, and "the fact that the palace [i.e. Palace I] was built in the reign of Darius, leads to the conclusion that Xerxes is here referred to as crown prince". While I do not agree with Henkelman's second statement, favouring – as hinted above – the assignment of substantial phases of the structural work and probably all of the decorations of Palace I to Xerxes' reign, I would like to emphasize the full parallelism between "the scribe's silence on Xerxes' title" on NN 1657 and on the label of Xerxes appearing on the figure of Darius on the east jamb of the southern doorway of the main hall

⁴² Henkelman 2010: 28: ^{HAL}tam₅-šá-ka₄-ma | ³hi-še ^{HAL}ba-ir-da ^{AŠ}ri-pi ku-|⁴ti-ra! ^{HAL}še-ir-šá da-ma | ⁵a-ak 3 ^{HAL}ak-ka₄-ia[-še i-da-ka₄] | ⁶^{HAL}EŠŠANA-ik-ka₄-mar ^{AŠ}ba-ir-da.

⁴³ Henkelman 2010: 29-31.

of the Palace. The context filling a silence may be equally found on a tablet and on the stone of a royal building.⁴⁴

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⁴⁴ The reader will find a plan of the Persepolis platform at Fig. 4.

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FIGURES (PLATES CVII-CX)

- Fig. 1. Inscriptions in the south doorway of Palace I at Persepolis (Shahbazi 1985: 10, fig. 1).
- Fig. 2. Inscriptions in Palace I at Persepolis (DARIOSH Project). Background plan courtesy of the Parsa-Pasargadae Research Foundation.
- Fig. 3. Inscriptions in Palace F at Persepolis (DARIOSH Project). Background plan courtesy of the Parsa-Pasargadae Research Foundation.
- Fig. 4. Plan of the Persepolis platform (courtesy of the Parsa-Pasargadae Research Foundation).

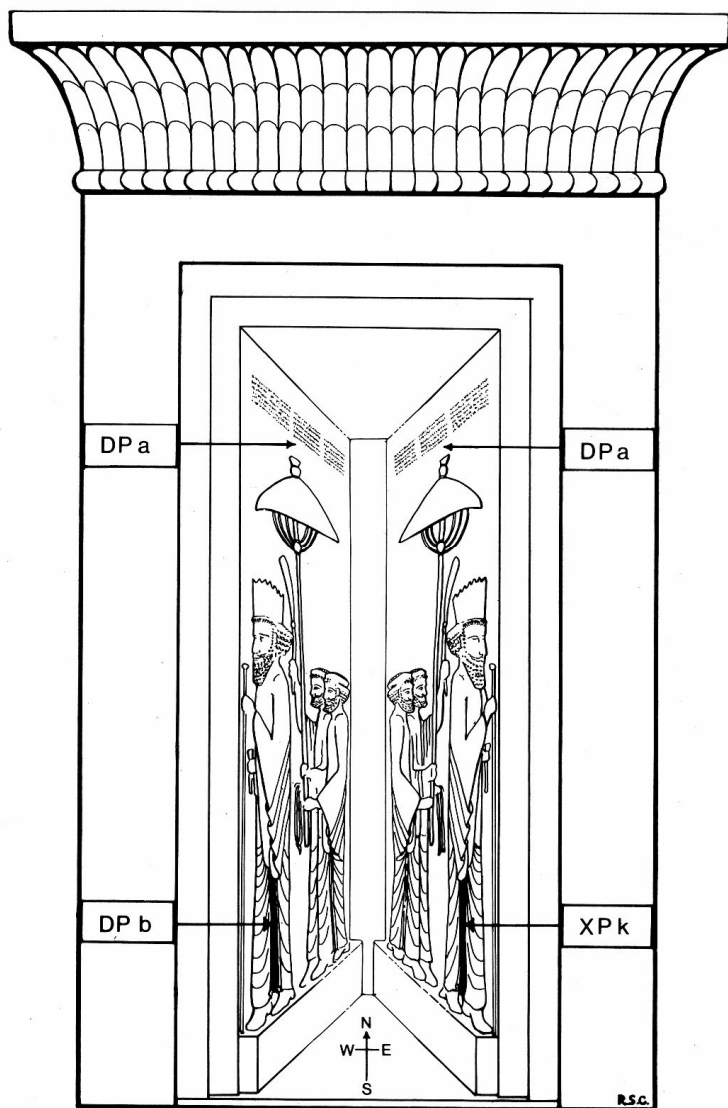


Fig. 1. Inscriptions in the south doorway of Palace I at Persepolis (Shahbazi 1985: 10, fig. 1).

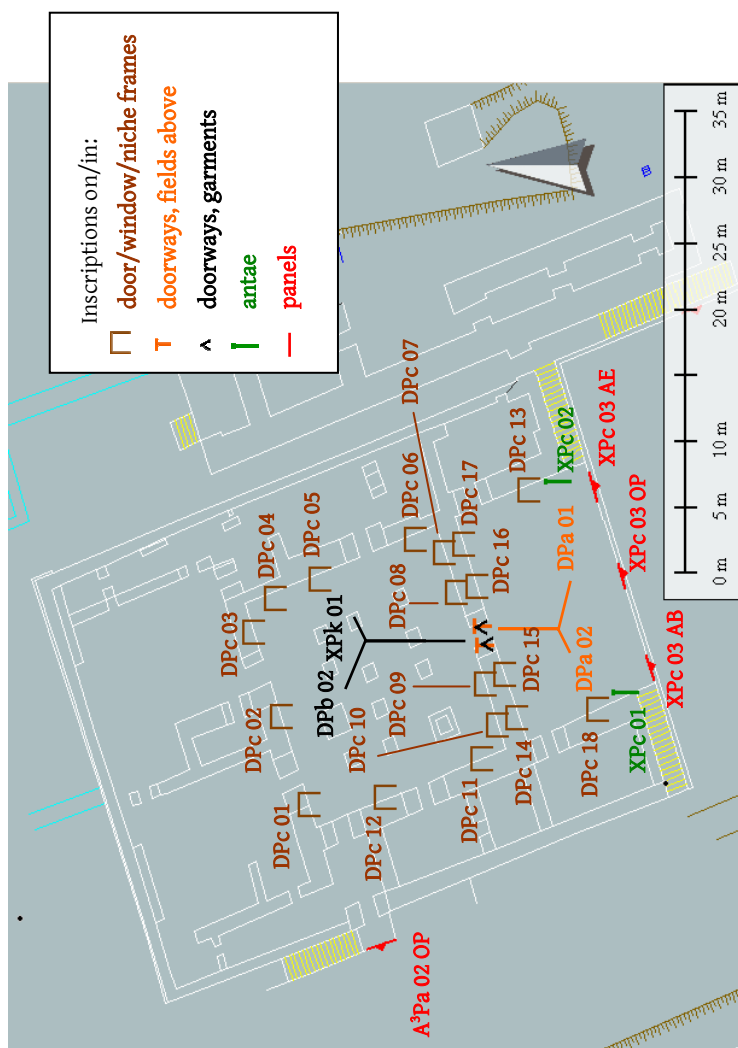


Fig. 2. Inscriptions in Palace I at Persepolis (DARIOSH Project).
Background plan courtesy of the Parsa-Pasargadae Research Foundation.

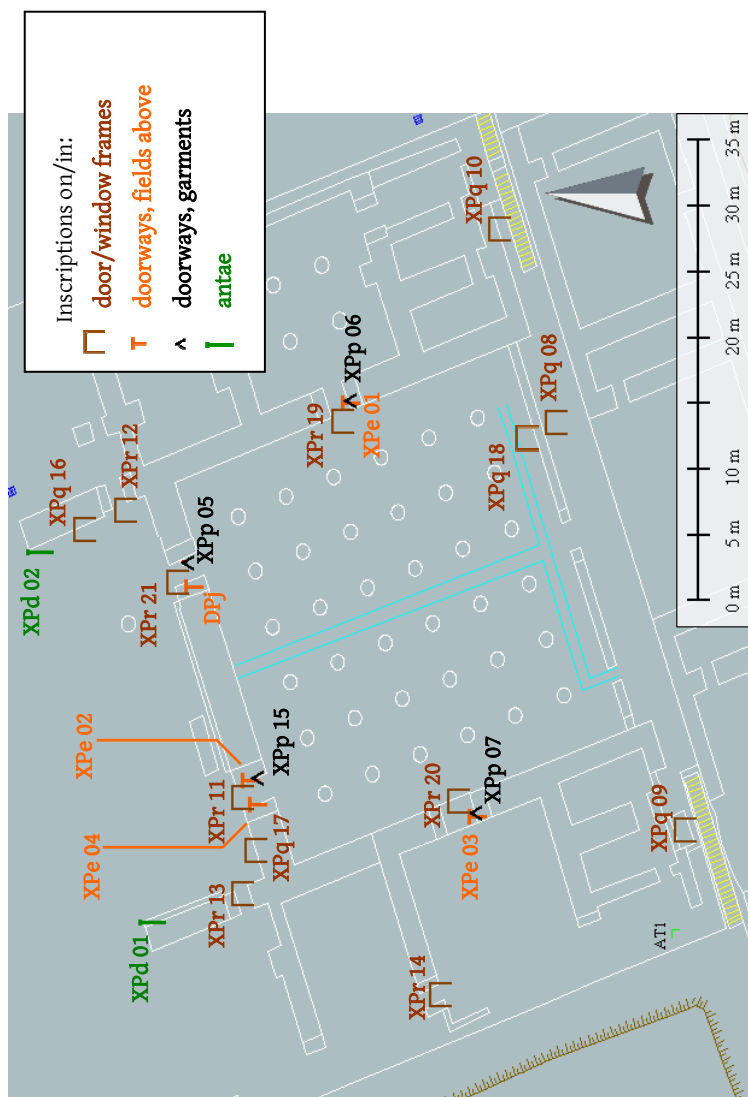


Fig. 3. Inscriptions in Palace F at Persepolis (DARIOSH Project).
Background plan courtesy of the Parsa-Pasargadae Research Foundation.

Fig. 4 (next page). Plan of the Persepolis platform
(courtesy of the Parsa-Pasargadae Research Foundation).

